

MINUTES
Academic Affairs Committee
February 5, 2001

The Academic Affairs Committee of the Council on Postsecondary Education met February 5, 2001, 8:30 a.m. (ET), Office of the Attorney General, 1024 Capital Center Drive, Conference Room B, Frankfort, Kentucky.

ROLL CALL

The following members were present: Chair Norma Adams, Peggy Bertelsman, Shirley Menendez, Joan Taylor, and Lois Weinberg. Philip Huddleston, Charles Whitehead, and Gene Wilhoit did not attend.

*APPROVAL OF
MINUTES*

The minutes of the November 13, 2000, and the January 16, 2001, meetings were approved as distributed.

*LOCAL P-16 COUNCIL
DEVELOPMENT*

RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends the council endorse the plan to develop local P-16 councils created by the state P-16 Council but delay consideration of funding for the plan until its March 19 meeting.

Local P-16 councils were discussed at the February 4, 2001, joint meeting of the Council on Postsecondary Education and the Kentucky Board of Education. With the uncertainty about the state budget, a vote on funding was not held. A request for proposals has been drafted but will not be released until it is known if funding will be available. Proposals will be reviewed and those that are funded will receive up to \$10,000. The request for proposals requires the following: a plan of work, a statement about sustainability, and a brief annual report.

The purpose of the funding and possible funding increases were discussed. It was explained that local councils should work to gain community support. One-time funding would be used only for start-up costs, like staff, supplies, and advertising. It was suggested that local councils should be established before receiving funding. Members and staff said there is already great interest and several existing local councils are in various stages of development. Another question was asked about who would oversee the funds and approve proposals. Reviewers will include council staff and representatives from other state agencies. This group would also make recommendations for funding.

To help answer remaining questions, council members were given a copy of the request for proposals. Ms. Bertelsman asked that staff assure the council that the request for proposals would not be too restrictive. Ms. Adams and Ms. Menendez said they, as members of the state P-16 Council, have reviewed the draft of the request for proposals. The request allows communities a great deal of flexibility in establishing local councils.

MOTION: Ms. Weinberg moved that the recommendation be approved. Ms. Menendez seconded the motion.

VOTE: The motion passed.

JOINT ENGINEERING
PROGRAMS
(UK/UofL/WKU/MuSU)

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- The staff recommends that the council reassert its commitment to the “Strategy for Statewide Engineering Education in Kentucky” and to approving joint programs in engineering to begin fall 2001.
- The staff recommends that the council commend Western Kentucky University, Murray State University, the University of Kentucky, and the University of Louisville for their work in creating the Frameworks of Agreement on joint bachelor’s degrees in civil, mechanical, electrical, and telecommunications engineering starting fall 2001. The universities will soon seek approval for each joint program, providing full detail on curriculum, staffing, and cost.

Daniel Rabuzzi, council associate vice president for economic development initiatives, introduced Dr. Tom Hanley (UofL), Dr. Tom Lester (UK), Dr. Martin Houston (WKU), and Dr. Gary Brockway (MuSU). They noted this is the only joint engineering program in the nation. The two agreements in the agenda book are not meant to ask council’s approval of programs. The detailed programs will be brought to the council at another time. This is a broad agreement on principles that could be adopted for use between other institutions. A policy committee will address such things as how tuition will be handled among institutions. An admissions committee will look at criteria for students.

UK is responsible for joint programs in chemical, mechanical, and civil engineering; UofL, for electrical, computer, and industrial engineering. It is important for faculty to develop a high-quality curriculum. These academic programs are important to “New Economy” initiatives.

Questions were raised about funding the programs. Engineering education cannot be done cheaply. Mr. Rabuzzi said meeting start-up needs in the midst of a biennium when we are facing budget cuts would be a challenge.

The deans were asked how students at other universities could pursue an engineering major. The deans responded that they are working with technical and community colleges and the independent institutions to create a core of five lower-division engineering courses that will be made available on the Web by fall 2002. This will enable students to get the first two years at a local institution.

The creation of the joint programs could increase the number of engineers in the state by 6 percent in five years. This increase depends on several factors, including the readiness of P-12 students. Potential engineering students need to prepare for college science and math courses by taking algebra in the eighth grade.

About 2.3 percent of Kentucky college students major in engineering, and nationally that number is 3.4 percent.

Ms. Menendez asked how many technically trained employees are required to support the work of one engineer. Various numbers have been given, up to 10. Community colleges can generate these associate degree level technologists.

Ms. Taylor suggested that engineering faculty take a more direct involvement in student recruitment. The original agreement, signed by all university presidents, encourages the promotion of the field of engineering for elementary and junior high school students.

Ms. Adams suggested that a portion of a state P-16 Council meeting be devoted to examining ways to stimulate interest in engineering careers by reaching out to elementary students. Ms. Taylor said Kentucky is losing many minority engineering students to Georgia Tech and the University of Tennessee. She suggested that university representatives attend meetings of minority groups, like Young Black Achievers. Kentucky needs to offer more scholarships to minorities to encourage them to stay in Kentucky.

Ms. Bertelsman asked what we are doing to attract high school seniors and undeclared college students to engineering. UK and UofL have strong recruitment programs that begin in the high school sophomore year. Most engineering majors decide in high school to major in engineering. Very few college students change their major

to engineering. If students do not come to college prepared to major in engineering, it is highly unlikely that they would succeed because of the critical math demands.

There is a Governor's School for Engineering within the Governor's Scholars Program. It was suggested that Kentucky consider having a Governor's Engineering Scholars Program.

In Paducah's engineering program, the 12 largest high schools in the Purchase region were tracked regarding the number of engineering majors at UK, compared to the number of engineering majors prior to the inception of the Paducah program. An academic advisor in the program works closely with high school counselors. This is very important to promoting the program. A trusted advisor is the key to successful recruitment.

Ms. Bertelsman asked how students at WKU and MuSU would become aware of these joint degree programs and whether faculty advise students so that they have an understanding of what is required. The deans said faculty have developed the curriculum and are the appropriate people to talk about the program and answer students' questions.

Gordon Davies, president of the Council on Postsecondary Education, commented that Eastern Kentucky University and Morehead State University are interested in developing engineering programs. Northern Kentucky University did a study on engineering needs, and were advised to focus on computer and information technology engineering. Others are interested, and we will see further developments around the state. The programs discussed will be offered fall 2001. Faculty and administrators will now work to develop curricula and detailed plans. In March or May 2001, they will come back to the council with program proposals. The council has talked with institutions about matching institution funds to get this program off the ground in fall 2001. Because of the possible 1 to 2 percent budget reductions this year, Mr. Davies said that it is critical that we come up with the money.

MOTION: Ms. Bertelsman moved that the recommendations be approved. Lois Weinberg seconded the motion.

VOTE: The motion passed.

*ACADEMIC PROGRAM
PRODUCTIVITY
REVIEW*

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- The staff recommends that the council accept the December 15, 2000, updates from the universities' academic program review and commends the universities for their efforts to evaluate low-productivity programs that could be improved or closed.
- The staff recommends that the council reaffirm its strong encouragement to faculty and staff from all academic disciplines to explore ways to share programs through statewide collaboratives (emphasizing the Kentucky Virtual University whenever possible), partnerships within clusters of institutions, or the development of complementary specializations, and commend faculty and staff for their efforts to develop these arrangements.

Bill Swinford, council senior associate, reported that the institutions have taken this process seriously and made many decisions regarding programs. He thanked them for their hard work. He referred the members to the chart on page 110 of the agenda book and explained the categories. There was discussion and further explanation about the categories, "Programs Receiving Special Attention" and "Programs to be Retained." The institutions gave examples of review methods and noted that all programs are under continuous review.

Ms. Menendez asked if a projection for future program needs can be made. Mr. Swinford responded that criterion was a factor in determining a program's retention or closing. Jim Applegate, council acting vice president for academic affairs, responded that different groups are looking at these future needs. The chief academic officers are studying teacher education. Committees made up of chief academic officers from various public institutions are examining programs in the visual and performing arts and foreign languages. They will report at a later date.

MOTION: Ms. Weinberg moved that the recommendations be approved. Ms. Menendez seconded the motion.

VOTE: The motion passed.

*NEW PROGRAM
APPROVAL: MS IN
PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT
STUDIES, UNIVERSITY
OF KENTUCKY*

RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the council approve the master of science in physician assistant studies proposed by the University of Kentucky. The program would be registered in CIP 51.0807 (Physician Assistant).

Mr. Swinford reported that this program proposal was generated by sensitivity to the labor market and the needs of graduates. Mr. Swinford introduced Dr. James Holsinger, UK College of Medicine chancellor, who introduced Dr. Laura Gonzalez, College of Allied Health Professions associate dean. Dr. Holsinger explained the need for a change in the program from a bachelor's to a master's to better respond to the demands for the profession and allow graduates to be more competitive in the job market. Courses were added or updated.

There was discussion about who seeks this degree and the responsibilities they will have when working in the profession. Dr. Holsinger said that a physician assistant works under the guidance of a physician and can write some prescriptions.

The MoSU program is funded by an endowment at UK. Because of funding, the number of students is limited. Students perform clerkships throughout the state. About 30 percent of the students stay in Kentucky.

Ms. Taylor said the first two physician assistants in the state were African Americans.

MOTION: Ms. Bertelsman moved that the recommendation be approved. Ms. Menendez seconded the motion.

VOTE: The motion passed.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:55 a.m.

James L. Applegate
Acting Vice President for Academic Affairs

Jerry Ann Warmouth
Secretary